

ENG 215  
Introduction to Creative Writing  
Dr. Adam Abraham  
Spring 2024 (Block 8)

## SHORT STORY & WORKSHOP

Short Story DUE: Friday 3 May by 4:30 pm  
Email to [aabraham@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:aabraham@cornellcollege.edu)  
Submit the story as an attachment in Microsoft Word or pdf form  
In the subject line write "SHORT STORY"

WORKSHOPS: Monday 6 May – Tuesday 7 May  
In class as scheduled

Edgar Allan Poe, writing a review of Nathaniel Hawthorne's tales, argued that a short story must be brief and must be coherent—that is, all the pieces somehow work together.

For the third assignment of the block, each student will write a short story. Aim for approximately 1,000 words. And try to write a story that is somehow singular: a moment of conflict, a sudden realization, a meeting of two individuals, maybe a monologue.

Write the short story using one of the narrative situations as defined by Franz Stanzel (first-person, authorial, or figural). There is no need to tell the reader. But if asked, you should be able to articulate which one was chosen.

For this assignment, you might expand on one of the entries in your notebook, develop an idea you have nurtured for a while, or launch a brand-new conception. In any case, imagine a wide readership for your story (at least sixteen people right now), and write something that will be clear and compelling.

All submitted stories will be assigned to a group: Workshop I or Workshop II. Stories in Workshop I will be discussed on Monday; stories in Workshop II will be discussed on Tuesday. Attendance is required for ALL workshop sessions. Any student who misses a session or an entire day will lose points. If an emergency arises, contact the instructor.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Use a normal, 12-point font, with serifs, such as Times or Times New Roman.
- Double-space EVERY LINE. Double-space is not single-space or space-and-one-half.  
In Microsoft Word, you should select “2.0.”
- Write in multiple paragraphs. Indent each new paragraph. Do no skip lines.
- Follow the conventions of edited American English unless there is a good reason not to. When in doubt, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*.
- Number the pages and include your last name in the upper-right corner (with the exception of the first page).
- In the upper-left corner of the FIRST PAGE, include the following information:

Your Name

ENG 215

Date

Short Story

- One line below that, write a TITLE for your short story, centered, using mixed case (Capitals and lowercase). Do not italicize, underline, or use bold print.

## STUDENT RESPONSES

Prior to Workshop I and Workshop II, you should write a brief response for each and every short story submitted (except your own). Use the paper in your Roaring Spring notebook. Tear pages in half. Each half-page submission will be handed to the story’s author on the appropriate workshop day. These responses should be handwritten (it is more personal). On each half-page, use the following format:

“Title of Story”

One-line summary: what happens in the story (as far as you can understand)

- 1 Strength
- 2 Strength
- 3 Strength

- 1 Area for improvement
- 2 Area for improvement
- 3 Area for improvement

### WORKSHOP LEADERSHIP

Each short story will be assigned a workshop leader. When we discuss that story, the leader will stand at the front of the room. (The author can remain seated.) The leader will conduct the classroom discussion by using these steps:

- Briefly introduce the short story. Offer a quick summary/overview (to remind everyone about the story’s content).
- Introduce the author and ask the author to read a selection. (When you are the author, be prepared to read a selection out loud—approximately one paragraph.)
- Discuss some strengths and areas to improve in the next draft.
- Raise one question about the story for the class to discuss.
- Invite the class and author to reply to any of the above. (No reply is necessary.)

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS

When discussing a student’s short story as workshop leader or member of the class, do not refer to the author as “you” or any other pronoun. Instead, refer to “the author” or “the story.” Example: “I think the author could try to do ....” This terminology makes the process a bit more formal—and less like a personal accusation.

When you are the author, listen. Take notes. Nod your head. Do not argue. At the end of the discussion, respond if you like. Remember: it is your story. You are not obliged to make any of these changes. Use what is helpful when you revise. Ignore the rest.

## GRADING

The short story is worth 10 points (10 percent of your final grade); the workshop is worth ten points (10 percent of your final grade). The grading here is holistic and non-evaluative. If you complete the assignments as delineated in this document, you will earn all the available points. The instructor will not judge the short story or your workshop-leadership performance.

The breakdown is as follows:

5 points. Submit a short story that fulfills the requirements in this document. Submit by email on or before the deadline. If you submit late—even one minute late—you will lose one point. If you submit an hour or more after the deadline, you may be excluded from the workshop, which means losing points as well as student and instructor feedback.

5 points. Show up on the day on which your story is scheduled to be workshopped. The workshop is a unique, in-person opportunity; it cannot be replicated later. If you miss your story's workshop for any reason whatsoever, contact the instructor as soon as possible. You are at risk of losing 5 points in your final grade for the course.

5 points. Write handwritten student responses for every short story before the start of each workshop, at 9:30 am. Your responses should be clear; they should be legible; they should be helpful.

5 points. Serve as a workshop leader for one short story, as assigned. Follow the steps that appear on the previous page. Be gracious. Listen to your fellow students and listen to the story's author. If you miss the class in which you are a workshop leader, contact the instructor as soon as possible. You are at risk of losing 5 points in your final grade for the course.

If you want more guidance, feel free to ask a question or schedule a Zoom appointment.